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[Reports to the Supervising Surgeon-General United States Marine-Hospital Service.]

REPORTS FROM THE MEXICAN BORDER.

El Paso.—Sanitary Inspector Alexander reports, May 27, as follows: I have the honor to inform you that during the week ended May 27, 1899, no passengers arrived at this port from Vera Cruz or Tampico, Mexico.

Laredo.—Acting Assistant Surgeon Hamilton reports, May 25, as follows:

Inclosed please find mortality report at Nuevo Laredo, Mexico, on which appears 1 death from smallpox. I am, therefore, keeping a day and night inspection at footbridge, and allow no bedding, etc., to enter, and also see that all are successfully vaccinated. Report at footbridge for week ended May 20: Vaccinated, 18; deported, 6; examined and allowed to pass without revaccinating, 3,306; total inspected, 3,330. Among the persons deported was a family of 5 persons, immigrants, 1 child of which still had pustules of smallpox, and, therefore, family was denied entry by quarantine guard.

Smallpox report for Laredo, Tex.: New cases, 1; deaths, none.

Refused entry by railroad on account of quarantine regulations, May 14, 1 man from Tampico; May 24, 1 from Vera Cruz, and 1 from Tampico; first mentioned had baggage disinfected and has entered.

On May 23 received report from Acting Assistant Surgeon Hodgson, of Vera Cruz, stating the condition of yellow fever at that port. I have information from another source, which I consider reliable, that the present epidemic there is very fatal; also, that it is now becoming epidemic at Cordova, a place between Vera Cruz and the City of Mexico. Altitude of said place 2,500 feet. Yellow fever has existed there before. It exists also at several small places near Vera Cruz. I understand that the 2 railroads, running between Vera Cruz and the City of Mexico, never disinfect their coaches, therefore persons from intermediate points not infected, upon riding in above-named coaches, may become infected, and if coming to the United States might bring infection. Had I not better hold in quarantine all persons who have ridden on coaches, which run between Vera Cruz and Mexico City, within five days before arrival at the frontier? We frequently have persons entering from Jalapa, Orizaba, Cordova, Pueblo, etc.; that is, points noninfected, but on lines of railroad between Vera Cruz and Mexico City. If United States consul at City of Mexico could obtain and forward daily to this frontier passenger lists of the railroads running to Vera Cruz it would be of great service to the quarantine officers stationed on the Mexican frontier, or it might be better to exclude all passengers from City of Mexico, unless they brought a certificate from United States consul that they had been in said city at least five or more days. Of course this could be avoided by unscrupulous persons, but it would take them longer than otherwise to reach frontier.

I received a newspaper rumor of there now existing yellow fever at Tampico. Nothing as yet has been done by Mexican authorities to prevent yellow fever, when it exists at Tampico, from spreading to Monterey, and thereby increasing danger to the United States.

May 29, as follows: On account of various reports of yellow fever existing at Tampico the "Consejo Superior de Salubridad" of Mexico had a delegate investigate. He found only 1 death from yellow fever this month, a woman 23 years of age, native of Rio Verde, about 160

miles west from Tampico, and ten years a resident of Tampico. She lived in the suburbs of the city, and sold "tortillas" for a living; name, Eulogia Espinosa; died on 11th instant; autopsy was held confirming diagnosis. The family of said woman and her neighbors were isolated seven days. House was well disinfected and clothing, bedding, etc., burnt. No more new cases have developed since, but persons of that neighborhood are still under observation. That is the substance of a report to the chief council of health of Mexico.

May 30, as follows: Smallpox report for week ended May 27; no new cases, no deaths; 9 patients at hospital.

International foot and tramway bridge report for week ended May 27, 1899: Vaccinated, 14; deported on account of sickness or immigration laws, 8; examined and allowed entry without vaccination, 3,102; total examined, 3,124.

May 28: One man eight days from Vera Cruz refused entry by guard at footbridge; no baggage.

A case of plague on the steamship Gaelic.

SAN FRANCISCO QUARANTINE STATION,
Angel Island, Cal., May 22, 1899.

SIR: I have the honor to report that a case of (probable) plague occurred on the British steamship *Gaelic*, arrived here from Hongkong and way ports on the 20th instant.

When about twenty-four hours from Hongkong a Chinese steerage passenger was taken sick—feverish and vomiting. The ship's surgeon was not notified until the following morning, when he found the man unconscious, restless, with great prostration, temperature $103\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ F., pulse feeble, tongue brown, pupils greatly dilated, no glandular enlargement except a small mass in right cervical region. Death ensued in twenty-two hours from beginning of attack. His bedding and clothing were at once destroyed. At Woosung (Shanghai) the steerage was fumigated with sulphur, and all matting destroyed. At Nagasaki Quarantine Station every person on the ship was taken ashore, bathed, and clothing and baggage steamed. The bedding of cabin passengers and officers was left on the ship, but that of crew and Asiatic steerage passengers was steamed. In the disinfection of the ship, walls were scrubbed, and floors, carpets, and bedding were sprayed or sprinkled with a solution of carbolic acid. The ship's officers state that even caps (with leather visors, etc.,) were steamed and not much injured. And in the case of the U. S. transport *Centennial* (arrived here May 3), which was disinfected for smallpox at Nagasaki, the officers reported their shoes were treated the same as their clothing and came back to them "red hot." It seems a fair question to ask how they apply steam for disinfection. A seven days' detention followed the disinfection of the *Gaelic*. No other case occurred on the voyage.

Respectfully, yours,

S. D. BROOKS,
Surgeon, U. S. M. H. S.